



CODE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINE

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA - OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL



TEMPORARY TENTS/CANOPIES

Instructions and Application

1. Review the requirements, for permits, application processing, and plans review.
2. Then complete the attached application (see pages 5 & 6). All information must be printed in ink or typewritten.
3. Submit three copies of the completed application and all required attachments to the Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal not less than five business days prior to the event.

I. Permits

The following permits/submissions are required, depending on size of the tent and other factors. Please contact each agency to determine detailed requirements.

- ☐ **Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC)** Office of the Fire Marshal
4100 Chain Bridge Road, 2nd Floor
Fairfax, VA 22030 / 703-246-4849

SFPC-2401.2 - Approval shall be obtained from the fire code official for erecting or the use of a **tent exceeding 900 square feet or canopies exceeding 700 square feet**. A Fire Prevention Code Permit (FPCP) is required. Inflatable amusement devices are generally not considered to be in this category. Per SFPC 2000, subsection 2402.1, and USBC 2000, section 202, a canopy is open without sidewalls or drops on 75 percent or more of the perimeter and is supported by the building to which it is attached and at the outer end by at least one stanchion.

- ☐ **Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC)** Permit Application Center
12055 Government Center Parkway, 2nd Floor
Fairfax, VA 22035 / 703-222-0801

USBC 3103.1.1- A Building Permit is required for any tent, canopy or membrane structure that exceeds 900 square feet and/or is occupied by more than 50 people, including all connecting areas with a common means of egress. For purposes of compliance with the USBC, permits and inspection approvals issued by the fire code official shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements for permits and inspections required for building elements under the USBC if the structure is temporary except for electrical elements and associated structures (see separate sections). Temporary means that it is erected for a period of less than 180 days.

Therefore, only tents or canopies erected for 180 or more days require a separate building permit from the Fairfax County Building Department.

☐ **Electrical Code**

Permit Application Center
12055 Government Center Parkway, 2nd Floor
Fairfax, VA 22035 / 703-222-0801

If electrical service or temporary wiring is to be provided to the tent/canopy, an electrical permit and inspection by the electrical inspector is required. It is not necessary to obtain an electrical permit prior to issue of the FPCP, but the electrical inspection must be approved prior to the FPCP approval by the Fire Marshal.

☐ **Fairfax County Health Department**

10777 Main St
Fairfax, VA 22030 / 703-246-2444

Demonstration of adequate restroom facilities is required. Food preparation permits and sanitary safety guidelines may be obtained from the Health Department.

☐ **Zoning**

Department of Zoning and Planning
Zoning Permit Review
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 249
Fairfax, VA 22035 / 703-222-1359

A Temporary Special Permit may be required when a tent is used in conjunction with an event which is held outdoors and which is open to the public. Weddings with invited guests are not considered open to the public.

If a temporary special permit is required, it must be obtained prior to application for the FPCP. No FPCP will be issued without proof of the temporary special permit. If in doubt if a temporary special permit is required, please contact the Department of Zoning and Planning at the number above.

II. Tent Plan Application Processing Check-In Procedures:

1. Complete the attached Application for Display of Tents/Canopies, submit three copies of your site & tent plans (see below), and proof of issue of the Temporary Special Permit by Zoning (if required) to the Fire Prevention Division, (3rd floor of the Massey Bldg; 4100 Chain Bridge Road; Fairfax, VA. 22030; 703-246-4803). The fee for the FPCP is \$100.00. (Cash or check only. Credit cards are not accepted.)
2. If time permits, the tent plan application package will be reviewed by a Fire Protection Plans Reviewer while you wait (8:00-11:30 AM & 12:30-3:00 PM, **Tuesday through Thursday**), dependent upon the prior number of "walk-ins" ahead of your application. If you choose not to wait, most tent plan applications

will normally be reviewed within one business day. Please call (703-246-4803) to check on the review status of your plans prior to picking them up.

3. The approved tent plan application package must be picked up and the FPCP application must be completed. These are both done at Fire Prevention Division. You may schedule the inspection done by the Fire Marshal also. Prior to the Fire Marshal inspection, you must have obtained inspection and approval by the DPWES Office of Building Code Services, Electrical Division, if required.

III. Site and Tent Plan Review Requirements

Because tent plan review and onsite inspections have critical time deadlines, it is important to provide all the information requested on the tent application form. Fire Prevention personnel must be able to contact the responsible party to resolve any issues in a timely manner.

Provide three copies of the following documents when submitting Fire Prevention Code Permit Application:

All plans shall use an acceptable scale, such as 1:10 (1 inch equals 10 feet).

1. Site/Location Plan shall clearly show the following on each drawing:
 - a. Location name and address where tent is to be erected.
 - b. Date(s) of event.
 - c. Size of tent (length in feet by width in feet). If multiple tents are used, all tents must be shown, including the firebreak distance between tents.
 - d. Distance from tent to any combustible materials, including combustible trim on adjacent buildings. SFPC-2406.4 requires a tent under 15,000 square feet to be a minimum of 20' distance from any combustibles and a tent over 15,000 square feet to be a minimum of 50' distant.
 - e. Number of guests, wait staff and any other persons (e.g. D-Jay).
2. Tent Contents/Layout Plan shall clearly show the following on each drawing:
 - a. Scaled layout of tables & seats, with proper size of tables and seats shown around the tables. Allow 19" radius from the perimeter edge of the tables for seats, 36" clearance between the fabric sides of the tent and all contents within the tent, and a minimum of 12" between chair-backs placed back-to-back. If standing only (no seats), then state so on the plan. If a dance floor, stage, or platform is used show these items on the plan.
 - b. Scaled layout of aisles. Aisles shall not be less than 44" wide and shall be maintained at all times. All aisles shall lead to designated exits with exit signs. See table on the next page for requirements for minimum number of exits required based upon occupancy load.

OCCUPANT LOAD	MINIMUM NO. OF DESIGNATED EXITS
10 to 199	2
200 to 499	3
500 to 999	4
1,000 to 1,999	5
2,000 to 2,999	6
Over 3,000	7

- c. An **“EXIT”** sign installed above all designated exits. If there are sides on the tent or use is at night, the exit signs shall be illuminated and shall also have emergency white lights.
 - d. If any walls are attached to the tent and if so, their location.
 - e. The location and type of any approved heating, air-conditioning and electrical equipment being used.
 - f. The location of at least two fire extinguishers. Minimum size 2A10BC.
 - g. The location of not less than four **“NO SMOKING”** signs.
3. Flame Resistance Certificate(s) shall be submitted for each tent/canopy and have the following clearly identified on each certificate:
- a. Date, time and address of the event
 - b. Manufacturer/Applicator
 - c. Certification number
 - d. Tent/canopy fabric, size, and number of sections
4. Requests for approval of use of open flames, devices emitting fire, flame or heat, any flammable or combustible liquid, gas, charcoal, or other cooking devices (including warming trays) shall be submitted. Include any manufacturer's documentation, pictures and/or samples. The location of these activities shall be clearly noted on the plans. They shall not be permitted inside of or within 20' of the guest tent(s) without approval.

IV. Interior use and decorative materials within a tent or canopy requirements

- 1. Approval shall be obtained prior to the use of open flames or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking devices. Any cooking equipment using animal or vegetable oils and/or fats shall be protected by a class K rated portable fire extinguisher.
- 2. Combustible vegetation and/or waste materials shall be removed from the area occupied by the tent.
- 3. Combustible and/or decorative material shall not be hung from the underside of the tent.



**FAIRFAX COUNTY
FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT**

Office of the Fire Marshal
Fire Inspections Branch
4100 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, Virginia, 22030
703-246-4849

Application for the DISPLAY OF TENTS/CANOPIES

Applicant / Responsible Party

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone () _____

Date of Event: _____ Time of Event: _____

Address of Event: _____

Name of Facility: _____

Event Coordinator

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Tent Company

Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Date and Time tent is to be erected: _____

Caterer

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Expected Number in Attendance: _____

Time Caterer will be ready for floor layout inspection: _____

Conditions and acknowledgements

The applicant is required to review and initial the following requirements. By initialing each item, the applicant acknowledges their review and agreement to comply with any listed requirements as expressed by the Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal.

1. _____ Three copies of the following documents are attached:
_____ Site Plan
_____ Flame resistant certificate(s)
_____ Tent Content Layout
2. _____ The following permit applications or approvals are attached (if required):
_____ Building Permit _____ Zoning Special Use
_____ Health Department
3. _____ No open flames, candles, devices emitting flame or heat, or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device (including warming trays) will be utilized without prior approval.
4. _____ Request for the use of open flames, candles, devices emitting flame or heat or cooking devices and accompanying documentation are attached.
5. _____ All conditions and requirements are to be in accordance with Virginia Statewide Prevention Code and the Fire Prevention Code of Fairfax County pertaining to the above application.
6. _____ Final approval is based upon plan review and Fire Marshal inspection upon setup the day of the event.

By my signature below, I attest the above information is accurate and correct. I acknowledge and agree to comply with all applicable requirements of the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code and the Fire Prevention Code of Fairfax County and its referenced standards even those not specifically expressed on this application.

I also acknowledge that if a permit is issued based upon this application, it shall be valid only at the location listed on the application, and for the specific date(s) and time(s) for which it is issued.

This application and attachments are submitted with the required permit fee of \$100.00 in the form of a check or money order payable to the COUNTY OF FAIRFAX.

If approved for permit issuance, I acknowledge that a copy of this application and all its attachments will be available on-site during the dates and times noted

I further acknowledge and understand that any violations identified after permit issuance may result in immediate permit suspension or revocation.

Signature of Applicant

Date

To be completed by the Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal

Plans reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

Plans are: ☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved

Application reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

FPCP Account Number: _____